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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### DETERMINANTS OF BOOK ONLINE BUYING BEHAVIOR OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN CAN THO UNIVERSITY, VIETNAM

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#### ABSTRACT

The article investigates the factors affecting on the book online buying decision by Undergraduate Students at Can Tho University and proposes the solution for business to overcome current constraints and direction in the future. Data used in this paper was collected from the survey of 200 observations. By using the statistical tools and EFA analysis, the findings showed that the factors belong to individual students, suppliers, screen layout and attributes related to the online network as the Book price and quality, Website interface, Prestige of website providers, Book, Book amount bought and additional information on books affect on the book online buying decision of the Undergraduate Students at Can Tho University.

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#### INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, is is widely used Internet for many reasons and purposes such as searching for product features, selecting product and services through internet, placing the order, making payments or many other means which is the followed by delivery of the acquired products through Internet, or other means and last it sales service through internet or others (Sinha, 2010). The Internet has developed into a vast global market place for the exchange of goods and services over the past few decades. It has been used as a significant medium, offering a wide assortment of products with 24 hours availability and wide area coverage in developed countries. In the developing countries, however, business to customer electronic commerce has been much below than anticipated proportion of total retail business due to its certain limitation (Sylke *et al.*, 2002). The emergence of online shopping has changed the way business conducted, and most customers have started to buy from online group buying websites. According to Lau (2011), an effective form of online shopping that places the power of volume discount in the hands of the customers is online group buying. These group buying websites offer up to 90 percent discounts to customer on various business ranging from restaurants, health, beauty, products and services (Lo *et al.*, 2012). More significantly, Erdogmus and Cicek (2011)

confirmed that online group buying system may provide a win-win situation for firms that bring discount on their products and services, and the customer. Online shopping behavior refers to the process of purchasing products or services via the Internet. Liang and Lai (2000) suggested that the process consists of five steps similar to those associated with traditional shopping behavior. It is explained that when potential customers recognized a need for some merchandise or service, they go to the Internet and search for need-related information. However, the potential customers are attracted by information about products or services associated with the felt need. The best fits criteria has been evaluated and chosen to meet the felt need of customers. Finally, a transaction is conducted and post sales service period. Li and Zhang (2002) concluded that online shopping attitude refers to customers' psychological state in terms of making purchases on the Internet. Very little attention has been paid on customer online group buying behavior. With the exception of studies by Sun *et al.*, (2010) on perceived trust and risk, Xie *et al.* (2011) on customer intention, and Chen and Wu (2010) on motivation, the extant literature is still scant explicate the theoretical paradigm underpinning consumer behavioral disposition in online shopping. In addition, majority of these extant studies investigated the relationship between power bases and group-buying decision. In brief, this study is carried out to fill in the gap by offering a better understanding on undergraduate students' book online shopping behavior in the case of Can Tho University of Vietnam.

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## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Theoretical background

It is widely accepted that various studies have used known theories to explain for online shopping behavior of the customers. This has illustrated that there are many factors affecting on online consumer behavior, but a complete coverage of all potential factors in one research model is almost impossible. Most of studies focus on a few major issues. For example, Koufaris (2002) studied factors which come from information systems by technology acceptance model, marketing by customer behavior and psychology by Flow and Environmental Psychology. In addition, Pavlou (2003) investigated interrelationship between consumer acceptance of e-commerce and trust, risk, perceived usefulness, and perceived ease of use. Furthermore, Pavlou and Fygenson (2006) examined customer' adoption of e-commerce with the extended theory of planned behavior (TPB). As a result, the studies shown that online shopping behavior is affected by demographocs, channel knowledge, perceived channel utility and shopping orientation (e.g Weiss, 2001). The findings indicated that compared with brick and mortar shoppers, online customers tend to be older (Bellman *et al.*, 1999; Weiss, 2001), better educated (Bellman *et al.*, 1999; Li *et al.*, 1999; Swinyard and Smith, 2003), have higher income (Bellman *et al.*, 1999; Li *et al.*, 1999; Swinyard and Smith, 2003). Men are more likely to purchase products and/or services from the Internet than women (Garbarino and Strahilevitz, 2004; Sylke *et al.*, 2002). Last but not least, reasons for shopping online have been cited for time efficiency, avoidance of crowds, and 24 hours shopping availability (Karayanni, 2003).

### Literature reviews

Online shopping is defined as perception of a person to shop online. It is illustrated that people are mostly more intend to shop online as it saves their time and they can do the work of hours in minutes still confined to the office or home. As discussed in previous studies, online shopping, as dependent variable, is affected by other independent variables such as attitude, trust, perceive of ease of use, perceived usefulness. Moreover, the other moderator variables also have affected on the dependent variables such as innovativeness and risk. Following are various literatures on the determinants of online shopping both in the World and Vietnam.

In the World, as online consumer behavior has been studied from either a consumer-oriented or a technology-oriented perspective, the types of determinants factors in online purchase intention defined in previous studies are diverse. These are demographic, personal traits, website quality, brand effect, online service quality, shopping orientation, shopping motivation, trust and perceived risk, internet experience, prior online shopping experience and product types (Zhou *et al.*, 2007; Cheung *et al.*, 2005). Attitude towards a behavior is either a positive or negative factor affecting on the online shopping of customers (Ajzen, 1985). Besides, George (2004) found that the online shopping of customer are affected by the attitude. These previous studies have all made significant contributions to our understanding of the dynamics of online shopping behavior. However, there is still a lack of consistent

understanding on the influence of relevant issues of online shopping behavior related to independent and dependent variables. In addition, Bellman *et al.* (1999) presented the relationship among demographics, personal characteristics, and attitudes towards online purchasing. They found that the customers are frequently shopping online who have more wired lifestyle and more time constraint. The perceived of ease use is a part of consumer's privacy concern to get the personal information (Stewart and Segars, 2002). Verhagen *et al.*, (2006) studied that the perceived of ease use are an individual's concerns about whether data are collected for one purpose may be used for another purpose. In addition, Carter *et al.* (2010) confirmed that perceived of ease use has important effect on getting information. Regarding such definitions, it is hypothetically accepted that as consumers who want to do an online shopping to get some information, they will use their personal information to achieve it.

Trust and risk perceptions have been considered in many studies. Risk perception refers to a consumer's perceptions of the uncertainty and adverse consequences of engaging in an activity (Hsu and Chiu, 2004). Online shopping may lead to different risks due to uncertainty. Pavlou (2003) clarified economic risk (monetary loss), seller performance risk (transaction fulfillment), security risk (theft of credit card information) and privacy risk (illegal disclosure of personal information). The risks impact on online shopping has been discussed in Bhatnagar *et al.* (2000). They studied two types of risks such as produc category risk which is associated with the product itself and financial risk showing that the perception of product and financial risks can be mitigated as consumers obtained more knowledgeable.

The definition of risk has been widely studied in literature from different perspectives, but in general terms it can be accepted that trust and risk are interwoven (Jarvenpaa *et al.*, 2000). Trust is considered in uncertain situations and this means assuming risks and becoming vulnerable to trusted sides. Therefore, trust plays a central role in leading consumers overcome perceptions of risk and can be used to the e-commerce context, when a website of retailer can be trusted to show competence, benevolence, and integrity. There is much less risk associated in engaging and interacting with the web retailer as trust make customers comfortable sharing personal information and making purchases. The relationship between risk and trust towards online shopping has discussed in several studies (Chen, 2009; Verhagen *et al.*, 2006; Pavlou, 2003). Regarding to the findings, this study will focus on trust as a major determinant of online shopping customers, assuming that seller performance risk and privacy and security risks are implicitly mentioned when a customer decides to trust on a web retailer's competence.

In Vietnam, Phuong (2012) "analysis of the factors affecting online shopping intention of customers in the Hue city". The study focused on two main objectives, namely the factors that affect the intention of shopping online, the second is the proposed solution is based on the first goal. The author based on the TAM (technology acceptance model) and the data used of 150 observations in Hue city. The article uses Multivariate regression method show that online shopping intention is influenced by the perceived risk, the company attributes, product benefits & feel and ease of use. The findings showed

that the risk perceived by the user, corporate properties & products are significantly affected on online shopping intentions. No study has been conducted on the online shopping of undergraduate students in Viet Nam. Based on theoretical and empirical studies, this paper investigates the determinants of book online shopping of the undergraduate students in Can Tho city. Expectedly, the findings of this paper may contribute the current theoretical issues and discovers some others issues related to the subject.

**Methodology**

The method used in this paper is useful in indicating the potential of the study findings' across different cultures and contexts. The paper is theory oriented and is considered with assessing the correspondence between relationships discernible across cases and a broad theoretically based interpretation of social phenomenon. In the studies of Ragin (1987) and Creswell (2003), they used given methods that focused their interest on testing hypothesis and propositions derived from theory to determine whether the predictive generalization of the theory hold. This paper used Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and descriptive analysis for the data collected for the purpose of examining research model generalisability. General model for the paper is assumed as follows.

$$X_i = A_{i1}F_1 + A_{i2}F_2 + A_{i3}F_3 + \dots + A_{im}F_m + V_iU_i$$

Where the  $X_i$  is defined as  $i^{th}$  standard variable;  $A_{ij}$ : is defined as regressor coefficients of standard variables factors  $j$  for variable  $i$ ;  $F$  is considered as general factor;  $V_i$ : is the coefficients of standard regressors for  $i$  variable;  $U_i$ : is defined as particular variable of  $i$  variables; and  $m$  is a number of general factors.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Sample overview**

Survey respondents who were actively engaged in online shopping in Can Tho City. The sample consists of 200 participants, 57% (114) of whom are women and 43% (86) of whom are men (Figure 1). The domination of women participants in this paper is surprising especially both genders have the same accessibility and freedom to participate in the survey. This reflected that the revolution in information and communication technology and the nature of the research, book online shopping have opened the work of members of the community particularly that carried out by women participation in the research and reflected the significant of using the internet and online shopping in the academic environments.

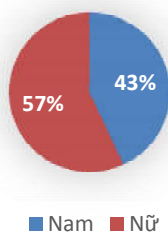


Figure 1. Sample by gender

**Analyszing the factors affecting on the book online buying of undergraduate students at Can Tho University**

Analysis method of reliability coefficient Alpha Cronbach's will remove the variables observed having variable correlation coefficients of duoi 0.3. Next, the variable factor that is smaller than 0.5 in the EFA analysis will continue to be removed. Results the following factor rotation

**Table 1. The results of rotation matrix**

Variable	Explanation	Factor group	
		1	2
T4	Book quality	0,829	
T1	Price	0,720	
T3	Website interface	0,656	
T2	Website prestige	0,634	
T7	The manipulation on the website	0,599	
T5	Customers care services	0,582	
L1	many incentives and promotions	0,569	
T6	Customer interaction		
L3	Compare prices of products		0,771
L5	Time savings		0,760
D3	How to order/delivery, simple payment		0,725
D2	Choose & buy more books at the same time		0,613
L2	Provides much information about the product		0,598
D1	Can buy book everywhere		
L4	Provides information for other goods and service		
- Eigenvalue		5,911	1,359
- Variance		39,406	48,465
- Cronbach's Alpha value		0,888	

In the Table 1, two groups can be explained in the small variable as follows. First, Group T factor: 7 powerful correlation variables is T1 (web interface), T2 (the Prestige), T3 (pricing), T4 (book quality), T5 (customer care services), T7 (the manipulation on the web) and L1 (many incentives and promotions). Second, Group L factor: there is a correlation of the 5 variables in this group which are the L2 (provides much information about the product), L3 (compare prices), L5 (time saving), D2 (can buy many books at once) and D3 (How to order/delivery, simple payment). Results of multivariate regression analysis illustrated the key factors and the of influence level of these factors on the behavior of students buying books.

**Table 2. Results of multivariate regression**

	Regression coefficients		Sig.	VIF
	Non-Standardized	Standardized		
	Beta	Beta		
Constant	0,509			
T	0,500	0,423	0,00	1,554
L	0,230	0,233	0,02	1,554

The findings showed that two groups of factors which are Company attributes and products are significantly affecting on the book online buying of undergraduate students in Can Tho University. Multivariate regression equation with standardized variables as follows:  $Y = 0,509 + 0,423 * T + 0,233 * L$

**Company and Product characteristics groups (T)**

The coefficients of variable *quality of book* and *the book price* are 0.829 and 0.720 meaning that these variables have very

high practical significance. Study of Li and Zhang (2002) has shown characteristic of assemblers, goods and services influenced directly on the customer's satisfaction. Product quality criteria of quality books included book's cover, paper quality, editorial and content. The Group's research of Anders *et al.* (2007) about the behavior of buying books online also determined that the prices are top concerns of students. The benefits of shopping online prices usually lower than conventional shopping. Besides, clients also receive more incentives, particularly with students, the price factor is extremely important when they consider buying or not and choose any provider to benefit more. In order to compete, every business should plan different prices, the different promotion program which aims to create more choice for buyers. With special items list, as stated above, the cost of publishing a book basically remains quite high so that the price of a book is still high compared to the average income of the students, the price factor accounted for 46%, ranking second in the limitations of online shopping.

The *website's interface* and *reputation* are significantly influencing on the book online buying of the students. Reputable companies that make up the trust of their customers, the more reputable companies will get the more confidence of customers. The prestige also reflect the quality of products/services offered by the companies, thus, it is significant factors that the companies need to build up. As reported in 2014, the internet users are least interested in the web interface, the coefficient of this factor already reflected in reverse. In the study of Constantinides (2002), us customers tend to visit more in the website design. Research of Kotler (2003) showed the web experience factors that directly influence the decision-making process of the customer. This factor is defined as the entire customer's perception of online companies from the process of their exposure to the combination of online marketing tools (Watchfire Whitepaper Series, 2000).

The remaining elements have equal weight as T7 (the manipulation on the website), T5 (customer service) and L1 (has many incentives and promotions), mean relative weighting factors greater than 0.5. Especially the L1 factors are coming into interest groups mentioned in the TAM model. However, after rotation factors, the L1 variable represented the correlated with the variables T. It is said that customers will consider *selected vendors* would give many compelling programs, saving costs which they receive.

### The perceived benefits group (L)

After rotation factor, perceived benefits group rest 5 specific variables such as L3 (compare prices), L5 (saves time), D3 (the way to order/delivery, simple payment), D2 (can choose to buy more books at the same time), L2 (offers many more product information). Of which the D2 and D3 meet the definition of group benefits. In this group, 3 variable factors are larger than 0.7 are big on L3, L5 and D3. As already discussed, the price is the most important factor when students decide to buy the book online so students can compare prices before making decision to buy. The price of each book (including promotions) is listed along with information about the book at the website; the customers are easily to compare the prices of the books offered by many bookstores and

various websites. Doing so can help students select the desired books with appropriate prices.

*Saving time* is considered as particular benefits of online purchasing. In order to buy book online, customers are requested from research information to make buying decision through electronic tools that cost less resources from the customers. Therefore, buying book online may help the buyers saving times as well as mitigating the complex procedures. In addition, the variable D3 – The *order procedure/delivery and simple payment* – has affected on the students' behavior on book online buying. It was reported in direct trading in 2014 that this variable accounted for 68% for the factors considered by the customer's online purchasing. Tamimi (2003) defined that website experienced included various issues such as search, clarify, gather and evaluate the information as well as online interact to company operation.

The two remaining variables, D2 and L2, *buy more books at the same time* and *provided much more information about the product* also influence the decision to buy books online. The website not only gives general information about the product such as content, pricing, but also provide other information such as the author, origin and the ratings of the book. In particular, the source of information from the customer before being publicly help customers can consult and make decisions. It is said that this is an important source of information.

### Conclusion

The article explores the factors that influence the decision to buy the book online by Students at Can Tho University and can give the solution for business to overcome current constraints and direction in the future, at the same time help students more access to this form of business. Through the survey data, found the majority of students have used this form of buying books online and the main approach of the two sources but they are through relatives, friends and social network facebook. The research results showed that the factors belong to individual students, suppliers, screen layout and attributes related to the online network as the Book price and quality, Website interface, Prestige of website providers, Book, Book amount bought and additional information on books affect the level decided to buy the book online by the students.

### Implication

Based on the findings, it is significant to propose possible implications for the book enterprises that have been the contributions of the Students. Firstly, the current websites need to be improved. Websites of books online should be increasingly invested more both in the forms and the content posted. Businesses can focus much more into web page forms and content to attract users who drag their website visitors and make a good impression with customers aimed at building trust and credibility with your customers. Along with the trend of the world, enterprises not only Vietnam but also of the other businesses in the world should focus more on the work of marketing and direct marketing in the form of "content marketing". Second, the goods and services online have to be considered carefully because they are usually significant issues

for the customers. Online business should have the promotions, discounts for customers by accumulating points, gift vouchers, promotional packages on order value, such as tiki.vn have the tiki, bookcare book covers service and donate with bookmark when buying books. Besides, enterprises also need more direct interaction with staff directly or through softwares.

Third, the way the ordering and/or delivery need to be simple and efficiency. The findings illustrated that many students are fail to trade online due to the complex procedures of order and delivery, especially the choice of forms of payment. Enterprises should optimize the way of payment most convenient for the customer, or the simple steps in the purchase process. A number of solutions for businesses in the overcome given problems are taking out the standard delivery time and defining the delivery process via email/sms/call.

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